

Walk-Off Home Run Does In Softball

Posted: Saturday, May 19, 2007

SALEM, VIRGINIA - Washington University (MO) third baseman Jamie Kressel led off the bottom of the eighth inning with a walk-off home run as the UW-Eau Claire softball team lost its first game at the NCAA Division III Softball Championship 1-0 here today at the James I. Moyer Sports Complex.

The game turned into a pitching dual between Washington's Laurel Sagartz and Eau Claire's **Mallory McKinney** (Sr.-Brooklyn Park, MN/Champlin Park). Sagartz entered the game with a 25-1 record while McKinney, a two-time All-American, sported an overall record of 18-9.

Both teams were unable to drive in runs early as Eau Claire stranded base runners in the second, third and fourth innings. The Bears also stranded base runners in each of the first four innings including two base runners in the third inning.

After both teams went down in order in the fifth inning the Bears threatened when Laura D?Andrea hit a two-out single to centerfield with a runner on. Both runners advanced into scoring position on an error by **Stephanie Salter** (Sr.-Schofield/D.C. Everest). McKinney was able to get Amy Vukovich to pop out to Salter ending the Bears' scoring threat.

The Blugolds started the top of the seventh inning with a single by **Michelle Butkus** (Jr.-Medford). **Tessa Pecha** (Jr.-Eau Claire/North) pinch ran for Butkus and advanced to second base on a single by **Jill Janke** (Jr.-Black River Falls). Eau Claire loaded the bases as **Shannon Barone** (Sr.-De Pere) reached base on an error by the third baseman on a sacrifice bunt. Pecha and Janke both advanced to second and third base on the play. With the bases loaded and one out **Bekki Kidnie** (Fr.-St. Paul, MN/Johnson) hit the ball back to the pitcher who quickly threw the ball to the catcher for the force out at home plate and then threw the ball to first base to complete the double play and end the inning.

The Bears stranded a runner in scoring position in the seventh inning to push the game into extra innings. Eau Claire went three up and three down in the top of the eighth inning setting up Kressel's home run to lead off the Bears' half of the inning to win the game.

Eau Claire scattered three hits and stranded five runners on base while the Bears totaled six hits and left eight runners on base. The Blugolds committed two errors while the Bears were charged with three errors. Janke collected two of Eau Claire's three hits while five different batters recorded hits for the Bears.

Sagartz pitched the distance striking out 11 Blugolds without a walk. McKinney struck out nine Bear batters to go along with three walks.

Tomorrow the Blugolds will face Emory (GA) in an elimination game at 1:30 P.M. Emory lost its opening game to top-seed Linfield (OR) 11-0 and advanced to tomorrow's game with a 12-3 victory over Moravian (PA).

Eau Claire-Washington University Box Score

- KM -